



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/084,308	02/28/2002	Mayo Toyota	04329.2748	6829

22852 7590 12/29/2005

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER
LLP
901 NEW YORK AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20001-4413

EXAMINER

HANNE, SARA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2179

DATE MAILED: 12/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/084,308	Applicant(s) TOYOTA ET AL.	
	Examiner Sara M. Hanne	Art Unit 2179	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to the amendment received on September 16, 2005.

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Block et al., US Patent Application Publication 2003/0050976, and further in view of Shtivelman, US Patent 6346952.

As in Claims 1, 7 and 13, Block et al. teaches a community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program for client terminals comprising an access control means for making user authentication of a client terminal as an access request source so as to permit the client terminal to post a message ("providing access to post/retrieve information", Par. 11) and community processing means for managing a virtual community in which plurality of client terminals can participate, and categorizing and accumulating messages posted, to the virtual community, from the client terminals, which are granted access permission by said access control means, for respective topics (various pages of Figure 2 and corresponding text), the community processing

means including: user access limiting means managing community type ("Team Home" "League Home" "My home") indicating an open level of each virtual community (X=access for page), and a member type indicating a participation attribute of a user to the virtual community (anonymous visitor, invited guest, participant, administrator), and determining accessible virtual community for each of the client terminals (Figure 2 determines the accessibility of the communities for every client that accesses the system) using a combination of the community type and member type for each virtual community as an access destination ("persons can have access to different information based upon the particular access level assigned to that person in relation to a specific community", Par. 18) and providing a window which allows each of the client terminals to access the accessible virtual community (user accesses accessible page ie., Fig. 3, 4 and corresponding text). While Block teaches access control to categorized and accumulating messages of a virtual community wherein access permission is done by topic, they fail to show the summary message managing means for managing summary messages which summarize messages accumulated in the virtual community for respective topics as recited in the claims. In the same field of the invention, Shtivelman teaches a messaging similar to that of Block. In addition, Shtivelman further teaches summary message managing means for managing summary messages which summarize messages accumulated in the virtual community for respective topics as recited in the claims (Fig. 8 and corresponding text). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Block and Shtivelman before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the access control to categorized and

accumulating messages of a virtual community wherein access permission is done by topic taught by Block to include the summary message managing means of Shtivelman, in order to obtain a access control means for allowing user's to view summary messages according to their access permissions for respective topics. One would have been motivated to make such a combination because a quick signally method to alert the user of the thread content would have been obtained, as taught by Shtivelman.

As in Claims 2, 8 and 14, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein the user access limiting means determines an access that a client terminal, as an access request source, can make on the basis of the combination of the community type and member type, and provides a window which allows only the determined to access the client terminal as the access request source (Par. 15 et seq.).

As in Claims 3, 9 and 15, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein the virtual community has a community type "membership" for only a group of authorized members (Administrators may view and edit all contents of the page), the user access limiting means permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is "member" to post and browse messages ("providing access to post/retrieve information", Par. 11), and inhibits user whose member type for the virtual community is unauthorized, "anonymous member" (Figure 2, "Anonymous visitor") from posting and browsing messages (no access, ref. 202).

As in Claims 4, 10 and 16, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein when the virtual community has a community type "membership" for only a group of authorized members (administrators), the user access limiting means permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is "member", to post and browse all messages (See the rejection on Claim 3 *supra*), including summary messages ("The personal home page, and the pages linked behind it, display summaries of the information to which the individual has access", Par. 25), and permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is unauthorized "intending member" or "anonymous member" to browse only summary messages having an open attribute of the summary messages in the virtual community (Par. 15 and Figure 2).

As in Claims 5, 11 and 17, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein the community types of each virtual community includes "open" that allows everyone to participate (League Home and Team Home are open to everyone), "membership" for only a group of authorized members (viewing "can see more" only by invite), and "closed" that is not open to the public other than authorized members (viewing the "still more" content only by participants), the member type indicating the participation attribute of the user includes "member" who has been authorized to participate (Participant), "temporary registered member" who is temporarily registered as a member (Invited Guest), "intending member" who has applied to participate but has not been authorized to participate yet (Par. 30), and "other" (anonymous visitor) and the user access limiting

means determines accesses that the client terminal, as the access request source can make on the basis of combinations between "open", "membership", and "closed" community types, and the "member", "temporary registered member", "intending member", and "other" member types (Figure 2 and corresponding text).

As in Claim 6, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program for searching messages accumulated in virtual communities in response to a search request from the client terminal (request My Messages ref. 316), and wherein the user access limiting means provides a search result list consisting of message search results that browse authority of the client terminal as the search request source can cover of messages which match the search result on the basis of a combination of the community type of the virtual community which is to undergo search, and the member type of the client terminal as the search request source for the virtual community (Par. 121-122).

As in Claims 12 and 18, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program for searching messages accumulated in virtual communities in response to a search request from the client terminal (request My Messages ref. 316), and wherein the user access limiting means provides a search result list consisting of message search results limited on the basis of a combination of the community type of the virtual community which is to undergo search, and the member type of the client terminal as the search request source for the virtual community (Par. 121-122 and Claim 1 rejection *supra*).

As in Claims 19, 21 and 23, Block et al. teaches a community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program for client terminals comprising an access control means for making user authentication of a given client terminal included among the client terminals as an access request source so as to permit the client terminal to post a message and community processing means for managing a virtual community in which plurality of client terminals can participate, and categorizing and accumulating messages posted, to the virtual community, from the client terminals, which are granted access permission by said access control means, for respective topics, the community processing means including summary message managing means for managing summary messages which summarizes messages accumulated in the virtual community for respective topics, user access limiting means managing community type indicating an open level of each virtual community, and a member type indicating a participation attribute of a user to the virtual community (See Claim 1 rejection *supra*), and when the virtual community has a community type "membership" for only a group of authorized members (administrators), the user access limiting means permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is "member", to post and browse all messages (See the rejection on Claim 3 *supra*), including summary messages ("The personal home page, and the pages linked behind it, display summaries of the information to which the individual has access", Par. 25), and permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is unauthorized "intending member" or "anonymous member" to browse only summary messages having an open attribute of the summary messages in the virtual community (Par. 15 and Figure 2).

As in Claims 20, 22 and 24, Block et al. teaches a community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program for client terminals comprising an access control means for making user authentication of a client terminal as an access request source so as to permit the client terminal to post a message and community processing means for managing a virtual community in which plurality of client terminals can participate and categorizing and accumulating messages posted, to the virtual community, from the client terminals, which are granted access permission by said access control means, for respective, search means for searching messages accumulated in virtual communities in response to a search request from the client terminal (Finder function), the community processing means including user access limiting means managing community type indicating an open level of each virtual community, and a member type indicating a participation attribute of a user to the virtual community (See Claim 1 rejection *supra*), and providing a search result list consisting of message search results that are limited on the basis of a combination of the community type of the virtual community which is to undergo search, and the member type of the client terminal as the search request source for the virtual community (Par. 121-122, 127). While Block teaches access control to categorized and accumulating messages of a virtual community wherein access permission is done by topic, they fail to show the full-text search as recited in the claims. In the same field of the invention, Shtivelman teaches a messaging similar to that of Block. In addition, Shtivelman further teaches full-text search as recited in the claims (Col. 3, line 26 et seq.). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Block and Shtivelman

before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the access control to categorized and accumulating messages of a virtual community wherein access permission is done by topic taught by Block to include the full-text search of Shtivelman, in order to obtain a access control means for allowing user's to search full-text messages according to their access permissions for respective topics. One would have been motivated to make such a combination because a quick signally method sort thread content according to user discretion would have been obtained, as taught by Shtivelman.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-24 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record on form PTO-892 and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Applicant is required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111(c) to consider these references fully when responding to this action. The documents cited therein teach similar message posting systems with access control levels for both the user and communities combined.

If a copy of a provisional application listed on the bottom portion of the accompanying Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) form is not included with this Office action and the PTO-892 has been annotated to indicate that the copy was not readily available, it is because the copy could not be readily obtained when the Office action was mailed. Should applicant desire a copy of such a provisional application, applicant should promptly request the copy from the Office of Public Records (OPR) in accordance with 37 CFR 1.14(a)(1)(iv), paying the required fee under 37 CFR 1.19(b)(1). If a copy is ordered from OPR, the shortened statutory period for reply to this Office action will not be reset under MPEP § 710.06 unless applicant can demonstrate a substantial delay by the Office in fulfilling the order for the copy of the provisional application. Where the applicant has been notified on the PTO-892 that a copy of the provisional application is not readily available, the provision of MPEP § 707.05(a) that a copy of the cited reference will be automatically furnished without charge does not apply.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sara M. Hanne whose telephone number is (571) 272-

4135. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30am-4:00pm, off on alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, WEILUN LO can be reached on (571) 272-4847. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

smh


WEILUN LO
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER